

[7th March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

development and deployment of missiles are consistent and decisions have been taken after careful considerations.

Grants by MoD to Government of Rajasthan

† 1184. DR. MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount provided by the Ministry of Defence to the Government of Rajasthan in the form of grants during the financial years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 and the details of the items, programmes of projects and specific subjects for which the grants was provided; and

(b) whether the Government of Rajasthan has timely submitted the account of the amount so spent to the Government?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) An amount of Rs. 4 lakhs was sanctioned to the Government of Rajasthan in May 2000 for payment of compensation to the families of two civilians who died in the Fire accidents which occurred at ammunition depot in Bharatpur in April 2000. The compensation was to be paid at the rate of Rs. 2 lakhs each to the legal heir of the deceased persons. This compensation has since been paid to the concerned persons. Another sanction for payment of an amount of Rs. 1 lakh was sanctioned to the Government of Rajasthan in January 2001 on account of compensation to be paid to the seven injured persons, including two seriously injured in the above mentioned fire accident. The two seriously injured persons were to be paid at the rate of Rs. 25,000/- each while the remaining Five injured persons were to be paid at the rate of Rs. 10,000/- each.

Thefts from the Inner Wheel Islands, Orissa

1185. DR. M. N. DAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last week of December, 2000 two most sophisticated Remote Control Cameras were stolen from the hundred-feet high towers of the Inner Wheel Islands near Dhamra in Orissa where defence experiments are supposed to be conducted;

(b) if so, whether the culprits have been arrested;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether it is also a fact that in January 2000, several Solar-Charge Batteries and Solar Plates were stolen from the same site which is regarded as a high-security zone; and

(e) whether the culprits were detected and apprehended?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) On 21st January, 2000, while carrying out regular maintenance, two camera fitted on 12m high towers were found missing.

(b) and (c) Unit Court of Inquiry was conducted and FIR was lodged with the local police. However, the culprits have not been arrested so far.

(d) From May to July 2000, three sets of Solar Panel Lighting Equipment with 12 volt batteries were stolen from water route to wheeler Islands.

(e) Yes, Sir. Dhamra police have apprehended the culprits.

IAF keeping Apace with Modernisation

1186. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a top defence committee has stated that a large part of country's air force an equipment would become obsolete over the next decade;

(b) whether forty per cent Indian Air Force fleet will have to be replaced over next ten years keeping in view the increased flying accidents of late; and

(c) what steps are being taken to augment the fleet strength in time?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Defence, dwelling on the Modernisation of the Air Force, has observed that the Indian Air Force may face depletion of certain equipment, due to obsolescence, in a matter of a few years. Some aircraft would be technically and operationally reaching obsolescence in near future. The IAF has formulated a Modernisation Plan to enhance its combat Aircraft strength in terms of quality, as well as, quantity. Plans are in hand to augment squadron force levels.

Recruitments in army from North-Eastern States

1187. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of recruitments at different levels in the army during the last Five years;